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President Bill Clinton was the first recipient of the Spartan Statesmanship Award for Distinguished Public Service Award.

Ken Burns, a distinguished filmmaker and documentarian, has had an enormous impact on American understanding of our history and human experience.

John Lewis has been a central figure in American politics and civil rights for decades and has served as a U.S. Representative (D-GA 5th District) for Georgia since 1987.

Evan Thomas, a highly acclaimed author, historian and journalist was presented with our first “Distinguished Author Award.”

Jo-Ellen Darcy is a MSU and Blanchard Administration Alumna, who served with distinction as an Assistant Secretary of the Army and head of the Army Corps of Engineers.

Burton Gerber is an MSU Alumnus, former career CIA Case Officer, CIA Station Chief, and current Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University.

Madeleine Albright is a Former U.S. Secretary of State & U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

Burton Gerber is an MSU Alumnus, former career CIA Case Officer, CIA Station Chief, and current Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University.

Renowned author and journalist Cokie Roberts had been a political commentator for ABC News and NPR for over 40 years. She will be missed by all who knew her and followed her career.

Cokie Roberts

Madeleine Albright is a Former U.S. Secretary of State & U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

Burton Gerber is an MSU Alumnus, former career CIA Case Officer, CIA Station Chief, and current Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University.

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Jim Blanchard was born in Detroit and raised in Ferndale. Jim Blanchard earned his B.A. in Social Science in 1964 and M.B.A. in 1965 from MSU and his J.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1968. He served four terms in the United States Congress (1975-1983) and two terms as governor of Michigan (1983-1991). He was the first MSU graduate to serve as governor of Michigan. Jim also served as US ambassador to Canada (1993-1996). He authored “Behind the Embassy Door” about his service in Canada. His performance as ambassador was recognized by Secretary of State Warren Christopher when he presented Jim with the Foreign Affairs Award for Public Service, making him one of only a handful of ambassadors to receive this prestigious award.

Jim Blanchard is a partner in the global law firm of DLA Piper and serves as co-chair of the Canada-US Law Institute and is Chair and President of The National Archives Foundation in Washington, D.C. Jim is also co-chair of the Ambassador’s Roundtable for the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Janet Blanchard, born and raised in Williamston, Michigan served as a career civil servant in the Michigan State government Departments of Education, Labor, Commerce, Civil Service and Management and Budget. In 1993, Janet served as associate director of presidential personnel for President Bill Clinton. In May of 2004, she was protocol officer for the dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Currently she is a member of the Meridian International Center Board of Trustees and also serves on the Board of Directors of the International Student House in Washington. Earlier she served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Michigan 4-H Foundation and in 2009 was inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame.

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